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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In the application of	Group Art Unit:	2165
Steven C. Robertson		
Serial No.: 09/324,601	Examiner:	Fadok, Mark A.
Filed on: 06/02/99		
Title: System and Method for Providing Electronic Multi-Merchant Gift Certificate & Contribution Brokering Services Over a Distributed Network		

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington DC 20231

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JAN 22 2002
Technology Center 2100

Dear Sir:

Applicant responds to the Office action dated 12/05/01 to which a response is due 3/05/02. No extension of time is required for consideration of this response.

Drawings

- A. The drawings filed on 6/2/99 were redone to correct the informalities indicated in the attached "Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review", PTO-948 and are enclosed as part of this response.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

- B. The Examiner rejected claims 1-22 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being clearly anticipated by WO 00/28461 A1 herein referred to as GILLIN et. al. Examiner also noted that GILLIN et. al. cites priority to US application 09/188,810, which has a filing date of 9 November 1998.

Gillin was published 13 October 1999, whereas this patent application was filed on 2 June 1999, thus establishing an earlier filing date. In addition, the applicant can't use a foreign application as a priority date per a conversation between said examiner and Steven C. Robertson on 13 December 2001. This conversation was in response to having not received a copy of the priority application to refute. Furthermore, the cited application appears to be in the process of abandonment.